

Significant Developments for the US Offshore Wind Energy Industry

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In the span of two weeks, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Board of Standards Review approved the Offshore Compliance Recommended Practices: 2022 Edition (OCRCP-1-2022), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced the first lease auction off California to be held in December of 2022, and BOEM finalized two wind energy areas in the Gulf of Mexico.

Newly Approved Guidance Encourages Development of the US Offshore Wind Industry

The ANSI Board of Standards Review approved the OCRCP-1-2022, a guidance project involving the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the US Department of the Interior's BOEM, the US Department of Energy, the Business Network for Offshore Wind, and the American Clean Power Association (ACP). The Subcommittee for ACP included more than 300 members of various offshore wind industry sectors.

The OCRCP-1-2022 is the first of five guidance documents for offshore wind energy recommended practices. The additional four will address the following topics:

- Floating offshore wind energy
- Meteorological and oceanographic data requirements
- Geotechnical and geophysical requirements for offshore wind energy technologies
- Minimum requirements for submarine cables

The goal is that all guidance documents together will promote safe designs and organized disposition of US offshore wind energy by considering the complexity of US geophysical, administrative, and environmental constraints, providing the US Department of the Interior with recommendations on industry best practices.

Public review of the four additional practice documents is scheduled for later this year.

First Offshore Wind Lease Sale in the Pacific Ocean to Take Place in December, 2022

BOEM recently announced that the first-ever lease auction for offshore wind off the coast of California will take place on December 6, 2022. The auction will consist of five leases, with Wind Energy Areas located off northern and central California. The [Final Sale Notice](#) provides auction details, lease terms and the qualified bidding companies that can participate in the auction. Two leases are located in Humboldt and three leases in Morro Bay. Together the five lease sale would cover approximately 370,000 acres, and generate 4.5 gigawatts enough to power more than 1.5 million homes.

Offshore Wind Energy Areas Finalized in the Gulf of Mexico

This week, BOEM finalized two wind energy areas in the Gulf of Mexico. One is located 24 nautical miles off the coast of Galveston, Texas, and the other is 56 nautical miles off the coast of Lake Charles, Louisiana. Together the Wind Energy Areas will produce enough clean energy to power almost three million homes.

The official designation follows from BOEM seeking input this summer on two draft Wind Energy Areas during a 30-day public comment period. BOEM extended the period and received a total of 107 comments. The final areas were slightly decreased to consider the Department of Defense and US Coast Guard's concerns.

The next step in the leasing process for the Gulf of Mexico is for BOEM to issue a Proposed Sale Notice for a 60-day public comment period, with BOEM currently targeting a lease sale in early or mid-2023 for the Gulf of Mexico.

These developments continue to depict this Administration's ambitious goals of reducing by 50% greenhouse emissions and deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind in the United States by 2030.

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